

HONORING LES CLARK II ON HIS SELECTION AS KERN COUNTY FAIR PERSON OF THE YEAR FOR 2022

### HON. KEVIN MCCARTHY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 15, 2022*

Mr. MCCARTHY. Madam Speaker, I rise today, along with my colleague, Congressman DAVID VALADAO, to honor Les Clark on his selection as the 2022 Kern County Fair Person of the Year. This significant achievement builds upon Les' incredible legacy of 50 years of community service, which has been recognized by the City of Taft, the Kern County Board of Supervisors, and the State of California.

Nearly five years ago, Congressman DAVID VALADAO and I rose to recognize and pay tribute to Les on his retirement as Executive Vice President of the Independent Oil Producers' Agency after 37 years of dedicated service to hardworking local oil producers. In that statement, we spoke to Les' character, drive, knowledge of the Kern oil patch, and vision for our community. And most importantly, we attested to his life of service, which has never stopped, even after his official retirement. That is why Congressman VALADAO and I are proud to see Les being honored at this year's Kern County Fair.

Dating back to 1916, the Kern County Fair has a rich history that cuts across generations and brings Californians together to celebrate all Kern County has to offer. During the 12 days of festivities, community members have the opportunity to play carnival games, eat barbeque, and listen to lively music, including the famous "Bakersfield Sound." It is also where our next generation of agricultural producers exhibit a variety of their livestock showings, demonstrating their husbandry skills. With Les being recognized as Person of the Year at this year's fair, his name will forever be tied to the Kern County Fair's rich history and all that it represents in our community and across the Central Valley.

On behalf of the 23rd and 21st Congressional Districts of California, Congressman VALADAO and I would like to thank Les for the impact he has made and continues to make on countless individuals, both professionally and privately, and congratulate him on receiving this special recognition. We wish him and his family, including his wife, June, two daughters, Tessa and Kerrie, son "Little Les," ten grandchildren, Arizona, Ayana, Cash, Darius, Easton, Keylan, Logun, Sierra, Tanisha, and Willow, and six great grandchildren, Zaria, Ivy, Koast, River, Luka, and Kaisley the very best as they celebrate at this year's fair.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE RITZ THEATER'S 115TH ANNIVERSARY

### HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 15, 2022*

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, today I honor the Ritz Theater on its 115th anniversary. The occasion was marked with a ribbon cutting, birthday cake, and historic tour on September 2, 2022.

In 1906, Italian immigrant and talented wax modeler S.Z. Poli built the Ritz Theater—then called the Poli—for \$250,000. The grand theater could seat more than 2,000 theatergoers in its orchestra, balcony, and second story balcony. On Labor Day 1907, the theater opened its doors as Scranton's premier vaudeville theater and attracted some of the biggest names in the industry including Harry Houdini, W.C. Fields, and Will Rogers. News stories from the time reported a young Buster Keaton tended bar across the street in between performances. The reputation of the theater and the superstars who performed on its stage sparked the popular saying "if you can play Scranton, you can play anywhere."

On October 6, 1930, the theater began screening films and was rebranded as the Ritz Theater. In 1937, the theater was remodeled in the Art Deco style; the second story balcony was removed; and it was again renamed and became the Comerford Theater. By 1941, the theater was managed by the legendary Paramount Pictures, Inc. through their subsidiary, Frank Walker. The theater was once again remodeled, and on May 5, 1950, the theater reopened with a screening of *Paid in Full* which starred Scranton's own Elizabeth Scott.

Over the next several decades, the theater thrived, drawing crowds of moviegoers downtown, but when the theater began to struggle financially, the main floor was converted into a mini mall in 1978 with the theater operations relocating to the former balcony. As competition from two multiplexes continued to mount, the Ritz shifted to showing short-run movies, and in July 2000, "U-571" was the last film shown before the theater closed.

In the early 2000s, the building was purchased, and the buyer found many of the treasures of the theater's heyday still intact. In 2016, the Creative and Performing Arts Academy of NEPA, an arts program for kids, teens, and adults, took up residence in the Ritz. Today, more than 300 students attend classes in music, theater, and dance and participate in more than 24 annual productions. The Ritz also houses the Ritz Mainstage Players, a semi-professional, audition-based company that performs musicals and plays.

Through triumphs and challenges, the Ritz Theater has been a beacon for the arts in downtown Scranton for more than a century, and I admire the ingenuity and determination it took to preserve its legacy. I am honored to join with everyone at the Ritz Theater to celebrate their 115th anniversary. May they continue to find great success and welcome audiences through their doors for many years to come.

CELEBRATING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF SOJOURNER TRUTH HOUSE

### HON. FRANK J. MRVAN

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 15, 2022*

Mr. MRVAN. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure and admiration that I recognize Sojourner Truth House as the organization celebrates its 25th anniversary. In honor of this momentous occasion, Sojourner Truth House will celebrate with a special event taking place on Sunday, September 18, 2022, at Avalon Manor in Merrillville, Indiana.

Sojourner Truth House, located in Gary, Indiana, is a ministry organization sponsored by Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ which provides shelter, support, and hope for homeless and at-risk women and children. The compassionate employees and volunteers at Sojourner Truth House assist and encourage their clients to regain their dignity and sense of purpose for themselves, their children, and their communities. The organization is dedicated to its mission which includes an emphasis on dignity and respect for all, strength in diversity and inclusion, and fostering a safe environment for its clients to identify and overcome the barriers in their lives. In addition, the organization is proud to provide numerous programs that have been immensely successful and provide clients with access to resources, classes, counseling, and various activities aimed at healing the mind, body, and spirit. For its noteworthy and lifelong positive impact on the community of Gary and the entirety of Northwest Indiana, Sojourner Truth House is worthy of the highest praise.

I would be remiss if I did not recognize some of the inspiring leaders in Northwest Indiana who have worked with Sojourner Truth House to bring about impactful change and to inspire the community. They include Sister Joan Fisher, PHJC, Sister Peg Spindler, CSA, Executive Director Angela Paul, Chairperson Scott Yahne, Vice-Chairperson Michael Gluszewski, Treasurer Sharon Morales, Secretary Greg Lee and other current members of the Board of Directors: Tai Adkins, Jodi Allen, Leo Barron, LaToya DuBose, Sister Annemarie Kampwerth, PHJC, Rozanne Morton, Margaret Tarchala, and Candace Williams.

I am also grateful for the sponsorship of Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ, and for the grant partnerships, organizations, friends, and community groups who work tirelessly to support this incredible organization.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring and congratulating Sojourner Truth House on its 25th anniversary. For the past 25 years, the staff and leadership have touched the lives of countless individuals through their unwavering commitment to those in need. The ministry is a beacon of hope for so many and serves as an inspiration to us all.

IN HONOR OF THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF SINCLAIR LODGE

### HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 15, 2022*

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, today I recognize the 150th Anniversary of the Sinclair Lodge No. 154 of Ancient Free Masons in West Columbia, South Carolina.

The Sinclair Lodge was organized on November 1, 1869, with 20 members, and through continued growth still maintains true to the vision statement of being men of faith, morality, and perseverance.

The Sinclair Lodge exemplifies greatness, taking good men and teaching them to be better men. The organization also demonstrates outstanding generosity through their support of various charities. Among these include academic scholarships to local high schools and even the Special Olympics of South Carolina.